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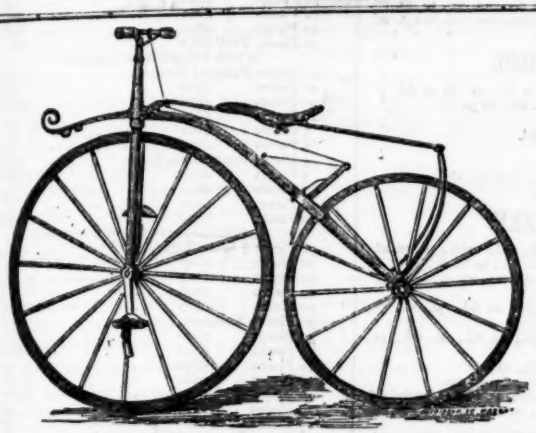

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These are from the most celebrated Makers.

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Flannel Barrows, 1s. 11½d., 2s. 3d., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., 5s., 7s. 6d., 10s. 6d., 15s., to 25s.
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Ties, Pocket Handkerchiefs, &c., all largely reduced.

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Fancy Ties, at nominal prices.

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5 Pieces ditto .. .. .. 10½d.
5 Pieces ditto .. .. .. 1s.
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10 Pieces ditto .. .. .. 1s. 6d.
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10 Pieces ditto .. .. .. 1s. 6d.
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Napkins, ready for use, 7s. 11d. to 21s. per dozen.
10 Dozen Towels .. .. 5½d.
10 Dozen ditto .. .. 7½d.
10 Dozen ditto .. .. 10½d.
5 Pieces Bird-eye Diapers .. .. 1s.
5 Pieces ditto .. .. .. 1s. 3d.
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5 Pieces ditto .. .. .. 1s.
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Several Hundred Yards Lace, 6½d., 8½d, to 5s. 6d.
Several Hundred Yards Real Valenciennes, 5½d., 6½d., 7½d., 8½d., to 2s. 6d.
Real Maltese Collars, 11½d., worth 2s. 6d.
Ditto Cluny, 1s., worth 2s. 6d.
Ditto, ditto, 10½d., worth 1s. 9d., in great variety.
Real Coifs, real Berthas, real Handkerchiefs, &c., very much reduced.
Honiton Collars, Berthas, Laces, prices will astonish.
Several hundred pounds' worth of Imitation Cluny Lace, new patterns, low prices.
Black Falls, Pellerines, Jackets, Berthas, &c.

SEWED MUSLINS.

18 Dozen Muslin Tie Handkerchiefs .... 8½d.
50 Dozen Muslin Ties ..... 9½d.
A very large assortment of Garibaldi Jackets, from 1s. 6d. to 25s. Purchased very cheap.
About 15 Dozens Muslin Chemisettes, nicely worked, 11½d. to 15s.
Bodices, Muslin Crossovers, all new this season.

IRISH CAMBRIC HANDKERCHIEFS.

40 Dozen .. .. .. 11½d. half-dozen.
50 Dozen .. .. .. 1s. 2½d. "
50 Dozen .. .. .. 1s. 4½d. "
50 Dozen .. .. .. 1s. 6½d. "
50 Dozen .. .. .. 1s. 9d. "
50 Dozen .. .. .. 2s. "
And so on to .. .. .. 9s. "
Ready Hemmed .. 1s. 1½d. to 9s. "
Hem Stitched .. 4½d. to 5s. each
Sewed Edgings, Scollops, and Insertions, amounting to upwards of £2,000.
Every Article Marked in Plain Figures.

G. R. ALLINSON, General Manchester Warehouse) Families supplied. (Any length cut from the piece at Wholesale Prices, (54a, High-st.

UMBRELLAS.

"BRITANNIA rules the waves"—no doubt: twice two is four; but it is a fact not altogether unworthy of notice that four is twice two; so, when the waves become clouds, and descend upon her in the form of rain, the waves rule Britannia, sending forth coughs and colds through the length and breadth of her; and though she still may rule the waves, Britannia with a red nose, a cold-water bandage round her throat, a lozenge in her mouth, a mustard-plaster on her chest, and her feet in hot water, does not present such a very dignified spectacle as the altitude of the sentiment would lead one to suppose. The fact must by this time have impressed itself upon the dullest comprehension, that we live in a rainy country: we propose, but rain disposes: we shuffle through existence in perpetual dread of it. We have all sorts of contrivances to tell us when it is coming—barometers, cones, drums, blobs of sea-weed carefully preserved, and curious little cottages inhabited by an eccentric lady and a still more eccentric gentleman, the former never coming out except when it is fine, the latter never coming out except when it is wet. We have all sorts of things to say when it is coming, but what have we when it is come? Umbrellas. That is all.

"O! is it all?" exclaims some sensitive inventor; "The fellow evidently has not seen my patent aquascutum!"

Wretched mortal, we *have* seen thy aquascutum! We have *worn* thy aquascutum. Who has not? Who has not beheld it in shop windows, in the piece, dotted with little pools of water, whereon little swans do swim about in all directions? Who, seduced by little swans, has not had it made up? And with whose favourable anticipations have not those little swans played big ducks and enormous drakes? Suppose you walk a mile or two, through rain, in our friend's patent aquascutum. When you reach your destination, off it goes; and in the mirror which you happen to be standing opposite, you see yourself lined all over like the pictorial gentlemen who illustrate "directions for self-measurement," and who insinuate themselves into the bosom of your family through the chink between the front door and the front-door step. There you stand—water-marked like a five-pound note—the victim of little swans!

Take the supposition that the patent aquascutum does not leak at the seams: two immense rivers, rising in the mountains of your neck and shoulders, and fed by tributary streams from different parts of the great plain of your body, empty themselves upon your knees, and, flowing down each leg, flood both your boots. Meanwhile, your friends avoid you like a pestilence, for you are sure to leave a wet mark on whatever you come near; while, if you have the assurance to attempt to enter an omnibus—but we draw the veil.

No, sensitive inventor, we have not got patent aquascutums, we have got umbrellas—nothing more. Into umbrellas' natures let us now inquire. If bitter beer's originator was the greatest benefactor of mankind, at any rate the umbrella's was its greatest malefactor. What a strange idea of proportion that man must have had, to make the apparatus round the head take up fifty times as much space as the feet. Possibly he would have advocated building church spires upside down, commencing with the vanes, and balancing the rest of them so carefully as to do away with any likelihood of their committing the unpardonable sin of losing their gravity in the midst of divine service. Nature, indeed, does give us one example of the sort, but what a hater of his kind he must have been who changed men into walking toadstools, women into locomotive mushrooms, and children into perambulating fungi! What a sad example, too, has that misanthrope set before our eyes: umbrellas are more quarrelsome than authors. How truly Churchill might have written thus:

> Umbrellas old, with more than savage rage,
> Unnatural war with new umbrellas wage!

Put two, when open, near to one-another, and each will try to dig as many of its angular points into the other as it conveniently can; and in this conflict, the younger of the combatants invariably gets the worst off. Not only does the umbrella hate its kind, but man. Observe with what malicious pleasure it places its ferrule just where he is going to sit down; see what delight its handle takes in catching in his watch-guard and bursting it in twain; notice with what glee it rears itself up in the corner of a carriage and drains on to his unconscious shoulders! When he handles it, it breaks a window on the slightest provocation. If he places it between his knees, it runs into his windpipe. Carry it in the street, and it will seize upon the first opportunity of attacking a passer-by. It will think nothing of knocking his hat off; and, after having done so, will perhaps recoil on you—its master—and knock yours off too. If you put it in a hatstand, by the time you want it, it has formed an unlawful attachment to every garment in the neighbourhood; and when you pull it out, brings half-a-dozen coats upon your shoulders. Its great flapping arms catch into everything, never say anything to anybody, but let everybody get about a yard away, and then, offering an enormous resistance, bring everybody back to detach themselves. If, to avoid all these misfortunes, you wrap it up, you have to do so at least three times before it is presentable; and then you have to undergo the irritating sensation of feeling that it is slowly wearing itself out precisely in the places that are most conspicuous.

Again, what an unmitigated nuisance an umbrella is at a meeting! On entering, you give it up to a bloated official, with about the same feelings, we imagine, as those with which an officer gives up his sword—not that you are sorry to part with it, but because you don't expect to see it again: which, as it represents coin, is unpleasant. In exchange for it, you get a greasy ticket. Meeting over, you present your greasy ticket to the official—who looks more bloated than ever, owing to the many unofficial attitudes he has had to assume in quest of missing articles—and fortunate you are if you can get it back within a quarter of an hour. It ought to be remarked, moreover, that umbrellas are made just an inch too wide to admit of passing, while extended, through any ordinary doorway in Great Britain, Ireland, or the Channel Islands: so you have to shut them up, and then reverse the operation, if there is any uncovered space within the door.

We would now direct attention to the uncompromising nature of the umbrella. If you walk with it, it wears to a stump; if you hold it in the middle, it soils the silk, and drops into the mud on every possible occasion; if, in despair, you cast it over your shoulder, it presently smashes a big plate glass front, mulcting you in £20 damages. If you take it to church, and—remembering how invariably it falls down in a solemn pause, when you carry it inside—leave it in the porch, you straightway forget all about it in delight at the devout demeanour of a stranger in a neighbouring pew. After service, you go for it: it has gone. So has the devout stranger. The coincidence is so extraordinary as to jeopardise your faith in human nature. If it revives, under the influence of dinner, and you think that the devout stranger has taken it by accident, but will return it the next Sunday, you will find that he has been unexpectedly detained.

Again, how treacherous is an umbrella! Take it into a shop, and it sneaks into a corner, getting left behind; while, if you make a journey with it, it gets over twice the ground that you do; often being brought back by a cabman, who does not ask for half-a-crown, but looks pathetic. It is worth noticing how eagerly it seizes on an opportunity of getting lost; and if it cannot find one, pines away until its handle is as yellow as a horse's teeth. It is as pleased as possible if it can manage to get taken home by what is called mistake, and will go racketing about the country till it comes back with its ribs smashed. And value is no cure for this, but rather the reverse; a silk umbrella being more unfaithful than an alpaca, and an alpaca more than—it ought to be.

Once more, how misbehaved it is! How unceremoniously it pokes people in the ribs! What unwarrantable slurs it casts upon their respectable hats! How it gets between their legs, and turns them into amateur acrobats! If, when you put it up, it stops half-way, it sticks there; if you want to open it, it prefers to stop closed; and if you wish to close it, it had rather remain open.

It is a consummate hypocrite. It professes to shield you from the wet. It insinuates itself into your household on that pretence; and it miserably fails. Instead of one stream, it subjects you to eight. What discord has it been the cause of! What friendships has it not dissolved!

Its influence upon the female mind is something singular. A woman takes it out upon the least pretence—if it has rained within a week, if the sun is hotly shining, or if it shows signs of raining in a day or two. It would be useless to attempt to combat this influence; but, at the same time, there are two delusions on the female mind aforesaid, having reference to it, which we must protest against: firstly, that when you take it out, it never rains, and when you don't, invariably does; and secondly, that, levelled at a midnight garotter, it bears a great resemblance to a gun.

We now lay this fact before the community:—We are getting wet through every other day; we are coughing and sneezing; we are in abject dread of rain. In this emergency, where is the inventive genius of our country?

TAKING HOLY ORDERS UNDER BISHOP LEE.

WITHIN three weeks from the present time, the Right Rev. J. Prince Lee, Bishop of Manchester, will hold an ordination for the admission of candidates to holy orders. As this is an ecclesiastical mystery to the outside world, it may not be out of place if we try to describe the character of the approaching ceremony; and we are fortunately able to do so from the notebooks of one who has himself undergone the dreaded ordeal. The ordinations of the Bishop of Manchester, like those of some eight or ten other bishops, are held three times a year, viz., on the second Sunday in Lent, on Trinity Sunday, and on the Sunday following the Ember season, which comes after September 14th. Why Dr. Lee does not ordain at Christmas, like most of the other bishops, is known only to the episcopal mind.

The candidate for deacon's orders is required, about three months before the ordination next ensuing, to apply by letter to the Bishop, and send therewith references to clergymen or other persons of respectability to whom his Lordship may apply, if he thinks proper, for further information. If the candidate's letter and references be satisfactory, the next thing is to have a personal interview with the Bishop at the Diocesan Registry. His Lordship does not care to have gentlemen "turning up" at Mauldeth Hall on matters of business, and as he is, fortunately, a thorough and most exemplary "business-man," a personal interview is a matter of few moments, and, if everything about the candidate be satisfactory, he has permission to present himself for examination prior to the ensuing ordination. His next step is to have a notice of his intended ordination published in the church of the parish in which he has usually resided. This notice is known as a *Si quis*, and is a challenge to the public that if anyone knows any moral impediment to the candidate's admission to holy orders, it must be stated, so that the Bishop may not ordain men whose character is doubtful. The certificate testifying to the fact of the *Si quis* having been read must be presented to the Bishop. The candidate must then get a testimonial from "three beneficed clergymen who have had opportunities of observing his conduct for three years last past." He must then have a nomination to a stipendiary curacy. These papers, with a certificate of Baptism, and some others, must be sent to the Bishop one month before the next ordination. In the case of a candidate for priest's orders, the only papers required are the *Si quis*, and a testimonial from three beneficed clergymen.

On the Wednesday before the ordination Sunday, the candidates for both deacon and priest's orders are called together to the Town Hall in Ardwick, for examination. They meet in a large room, where are arranged two long tables covered with baize, and laden with all needful writing paraphernalia. They sit alternately priest and deacon, that there may be no "cribbing." At about two o'clock the Bishop and his two chaplains enter. After prayers his Lordship addresses the candidates, urging them to write legibly in mercy to the tempers of his chaplains, to give condensed answers, and to avoid all "cribbing." He then retires with the deacons' chaplain into a little "sanctum" where he conducts the much-dreaded *vivâ voce* examinations in the Greek Testament. Candidates for deacon's orders are expected to be "well up" in the Gospels and Acts, and those for priest's orders in the Epistles. After the Bishop has retired, the chaplains read out the questions which are to be answered, and which are copied by each candidate. In most dioceses the examination-questions are printed some weeks beforehand, and by a little diplomacy may be seen by candidates, but Dr. Prince Lee, true to his schoolmaster instincts, never prints, but comes down to his examinations with questions newly written, thus guaranteeing an examination in which everyone has fair play. The questions are different for priests and deacons, and embrace Holy Scripture, its contents and objects, its geography, &c.; Church History; Evidences of Christianity; the Creeds; History of the United Church of England and Ireland; the Book of Common Prayer; the Thirty-nine Articles; and, in the case of priest candidates, parochial experience, the management of schools, and the like. These subjects take up about four papers, occupying Wednesday afternoon, all Thursday, and Friday morning, or nearly twelve hours in all.

While the papers are being written, the deacons are called in to the Bishop's "sanctum," one by one, in alphabetical order, taking with them a Greek Testament, text only. When they enter, they see their chaplain at one end of a table, with a Greek Testament, and some paper on which he takes notes of their examination; at the other end sits his Lordship, with a large-typed Greek Testament. The candidate is invited to sit down between the two, a canon to the right of him, a bishop to the left of him. The chaplain names the passage to be read. The candidate then reads some dozen verses in Greek, minding his "quantities" as he knows how, for his Lordship is a rigid prosodian, and has a grim satisfaction in correcting a university "swell." He then construes the Greek, rendering it as exactly as he can, taking care to avoid the many pitfalls into which a man who has allowed himself to be guided by the over-praised authorised version is sure to fall. The Bishop then asks him a few questions bearing upon the antiquities or the geography of the Holy Scriptures, and, after some twenty minutes' torture, he leaves the room. And here we pause to say that Dr. Lee is a first-rate Grecian and Hellenistic scholar. He has made the Greek Testament his constant study for twenty years, and, as might be expected, his expositions are most masterly; at least, so says our informant. This *vivâ voce* examination is really a torment. We are told that gentlemen who can sit down to a criticism paper on the Greek Testament, and answer it with scholarly accuracy, are, when with his Lordship, in such a nervous flutter that they make blunders the remembrance of which afterwards makes their cheeks burn with vexation. The fact is, that Dr. Lee savours strongly of the schoolmaster, and has not much of the paternal or the encouraging about him. So the *vivâ voce* ordeal seems more terrible than it really is; but our informant says that after all it is no joke to go through the *vivâ voce* with the Bishop of Manchester. But, to return to our narrative: Every candidate must pass this examination, whether deacon or priest; and while it goes on, and while every man is busy at his paper, the chaplain keeps examining either the sermons which have been sent (according to order) for his inspection, or the papers which may have been finished, and, if necessary, calls up any gentleman to criticise sermon or paper. On the Thursday the Bishop gives the candidates a cold collation, in the large room of the Town Hall, thus proving that he is "given to hospitality."

On Saturday morning the candidates are summoned to meet his Lordship, either at the Ardwick Town Hall or at the Registry, and then they learn their fate. If successful, they, in the presence of the Bishop, his chaplains and secretary, do a vast amount of swearing and signing; and then receive a charge from his Lordship, which charge is always worth hearing, we are told. It is comprehensive, earnest, wise, and affectionate; worthy of a Christian bishop. After all the fees are paid, the candidates are dismissed, with instructions to be at the Cathedral, or at Heaton Mersey, in due time on the following Sunday. And here we may say that the holding of the ordinations at Heaton Mersey is most inconvenient for candidates, on account of its distance from Manchester, and yet the Cathedral is very awkward for purposes of ordination. The service is a very solemn one, though very protracted, lasting nearly four hours. The Bishop throws a fervour and tenderness into the whole, which, from his sternness of character, no one would expect.

After the ordination, priests receive their "Letters of Orders," and deacons the same, with "Licenses to Preach." Then they separate, deacons to their diaconate, and priests to their curacies, all in hope of speedy preferment, and, let us trust, in hope also of successful service in the church.

THE CLUBS OF MANCHESTER.

THE ALBERT.

FIVE and twenty years ago, this enterprising town of Manchester—it was not then a city, with the best of bishops beaming over and blessing it—was about as unprepossessing a place of residence for a young foreigner, green from Deutschland, for instance, as could well be conceived. It was not that the place was grimy and smoky—for grime and smoke could be found in the Wupperthal or in the Saxon valleys—but it was so horribly dull in its social phases, and especially in its public amusements, that the heart of the typical young German sickened within him, as he contemplated a town of 200,000 inhabitants without a theatre save once a week, with no pleasant club within the radius of his purse-strings, with no clubs or social circle at all in which men could smoke mild cigars, consume harmless beer, and in soul or in song at least be "am Rhein am Rhein wo wachsen unsere Reben." It was, at that period, a very gloomy game for a young German, who on a Saturday evening found himself confronting twenty-four hours of leisure which he could not fill. All that could be done, these brave Deutschers did—the most recent ones at all events had little parties amongst themselves, and it is related in the traditions of that period that occasionally they began what was called "a whist" on Saturday evening, and drew out that entertainment consecutively until the shutters were opened on Monday morning. Another tradition presents itself to our mind's eye as we write these lines, viz.: that on one Sunday morning bright and cheery, the sun's rays glittered on a series of playing cards—aces and kings and queens and knaves—floating peacefully down the black brook which then flowed through Greenheys, having been dropped by an early Teuton who was hieing him home from "a whist." We ourselves remember very well at that time interrogating a young Frankforter as to what he did with himself from Saturday until Monday, and, with an easy though melancholy candour, the young Frankforter confessed that he chiefly lay in bed. This condition of things could not last. The attention of the conscript fathers of the German colony in the town was drawn to it, and a remedy for the isolation of the younger Deutschers was found in the establishment of the Albert Club, christened appropriately after the husband of our most gracious Queen. A suitable locality was found in Clifford Street. Three well-known gentlemen were appointed trustees, in whom the property of the Club was vested; and in Clifford Street, with varying fortunes—chiefly good fortunes—the Club abode until the spring of 1859, when it renewed its youth like a noble black eagle, and entered into the handsome and commodious building from which at this present writing it dates. The Albert Club House of to-day is a two-storied stuccoed detached edifice at the corner of Dover Street, with a frontage to Oxford Street. It stands some yards back from Oxford Street, and has a piece of garden ground, or shrubbery, in front, with a semi-circular carriage drive, and two large gates for the ingress and egress of vehicles. Externally, it has more the appearance of the suburban residence of a private gentleman than of a club-house. It was, indeed, the residence of an eminent Manchester merchant for many years, and is now the property of his heir and successor, from whom the Club holds it on a lease. The money required for the alterations necessary to fit it for a club-house, and to furnish it appropriately, was raised by an unsecured voluntary loan amongst the members, bearing interest; a portion of which has already been repaid. Any lender ceasing to be a member loses his claim to interest, but may still calculate the capital amongst his assets, and his heirs, executors, and assigns may take comfort to that extent.

The ground floor of the club-house consists of three principal apartments. On the right, as you enter, is a very capital room, used as a library. The club has a permanent library of its own, which was commenced some fifteen years ago, but which has been in a great measure superseded by Mudie and W. H. Smith and Son, to whose ample stores of modern literature it subscribes, thus ensuring for its members a constant supply of intellectual drink—drawn fresh, and we are compelled in justice to carry out the metaphor, and to say—frequently with a good froth on. In this room the best magazines and serials and the two great political quarterlies are to be found, as well as files of *Punch*, the *Illustrated London News*, the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, &c., &c. The corresponding room on the left of the entrance-hall is the news-room proper, which is as well furnished as a news-room need be, though, in deference to the foreign element in the club, there is, of course, a larger proportion of German and French journals than usually figures in home institutions of the sort. In compliment, however, to those instincts of our common nature to which all people that on earth do dwell accord a ready deference, the amplest apartment on the ground floor of the club is the dining-room, which is a really handsome apartment, lighted by a large bay window, looking upon Dover Street. When occasion requires it, and we understand occasion requires it not infrequently, the members of the Albert Club can enjoy as good a dinner as Germans or English need wish to sit down to, at a very moderate charge indeed. In the rear of the news-room is a well appointed lavatory, fitted up with rows of marble washing bowls, and fed with hot and cold water precisely as if they were "goes" of spirituous liquor. Here the hats and coats of the members hang, like rows of criminals that have been privately executed, but not cut down. Descending a couple of steps, we come to the steward's room and the kitchen, which are sufficiently removed from the front of the house to stifle that prevailing odour of soups and latent gravy, and the humble though resonant onion, which frequently announce somewhat prematurely in private houses the nature of the repast beforehand. The Albert Club members insist that a bill of fare is, or should be, a matter for the eyes, and not for the nose; and we are happy to concur with them in this general maxim. The back premises of the club-house are very spacious, and abut upon a large court-yard, with stable, saddle, and coach-house—stalls for six horses, and loose boxes for three. But, as the club as a corporation does not keep horses, it mitigates its rentcharge by sub-letting the stables to a horse dealer, but neither the horse dealer nor the horses are eligible as members. An attempt was made to form a "Kegelbahn," or alley for skittles, upon the ground now forming the court-yard, but the idea was promptly stamped out as beyond the legitimate scope of the club. A flight of stairs leading from the entrance-hall conducts us to the first floor of the club-house, where we find a billiard room, with two good tables, and every requisite of side seats, duly raised from the floor, and a snuggery corner for gossip and "Welsh rabbits." A speaking tube communicates with the steward's room, and through this convenient instrument the members can suck up their favourite drinks as if they were repetitive sherry coblers taken through a rain-water spout, *vice* straws, resigned. The room over the dining-room is the smoke-room, and we believe it to be, without exception, the best room of the kind in Manchester—certainly it is much superior to any club smoke-room now extant in this city. There is also a card-room, a committee-room, a private dining-room, and the usual offices, on this floor, but they are separated from the main frontage by folding doors, with large plate glass panels. Behind this door another back staircase, leading from the steward's passage, conducts the servants of the club to their sleeping rooms. And with this we have to finish our catalogue of the physical features of this compact little place, unless our readers would like to descend into the cellars with us. If they knew—as we do—what excellent tipple is twinkling there, they would drop down into the cellar "quite natural like." But we must draw a veil over this part of the subject. The club, very wisely, does not keep a very large stock of wines. It does not "lay down" wine at the instance of some cajoling vintner only to find, after ten years' loss of interest, that what it has laid down is scarcely worth the taking up again. It buys its wine carefully, in moderate quantities, paying its bills regularly every month; and it gives its members a pint of good honest claret at one-third or one-fourth of the price at which alone the British hotel keeper pretends that he could keep his house over his vinously extortionate head.

Of the management of this club, too much cannot be said in the way of eulogy. Its accounts are models of neatness and exactness. Its minutes of committees are like reams of brief paper, bound and lettered. Those who have the pleasure of knowing its honorary secretary—who would have been an administrator after the great Sir Robert Peel's own heart, and who has guided the club through all its vicissitudes from its

cradle even unto this day—may be able to form some slight notion of the persevering assiduity and the steadfast care which he has manifested during a quarter of a century. We venture to think that in the history of clubs there has been no parallel to the official career of this gentleman; and it is scarcely a year ago since the members, with one accord, commemorated his services by an enduring testimonial. Considering that the Albert is a suburban club, that it is located in one corner of this great city nearly a mile and a half from the Exchange, and that of necessity its advantages can only be available when the labours of the day are over, it must be confessed that its success—though not uniform, by any means—has been, under the circumstances, most astonishing. Some 120 members constitute its list: one half of these are gentlemen of foreign birth, and the other moiety are natives of the three kingdoms. The managing body reflects this constituency pretty accurately. When the club started in Clifford Street, the only payment demanded after admission by ballot was a subscription of four pounds annually. The change to the Dover Street building necessitated an alteration in the terms of admission. The annual subscriptions were raised from four pounds to five guineas, and an entrance fee of a like amount was imposed upon all members henceforth. Such is the present tariff, and such it is likely to remain. Of the original members, the list—as may easily be conceived—has been seriously weeded by the inevitable change of time and circumstance. Death has been busy. Retirement from business and withdrawal from England have altered very much the list of gentlemen who once stood upon the calendar as O. M.'s. But sufficient remain to consolidate the Society and to make it especially an adequate representative of a body of those foreign merchants who have done so much to dignify the honourable pursuits of commerce in our midst, and who, in gaining for themselves competent independence, have not forgotten how requisite for us all are the rational dissipations of social intercourse and innocent amusement. There is nothing palatial or super luxurious about the Albert Club—it aspires to nothing of the kind—but a genuine comfort pervades it throughout, and the members still retain a fondness for the old German verse

Nahrhafte Kost und ein frohes Gesicht
Geht uns weit über ein köstlich Gericht.

THE RED LION RAMPANT.

THE *King o' Scots* is at the present time making a tour through the provinces, like other princes, and his subjects are in excelsis. Mr. Halliday's adaptation of Scott's novel is a success in several large towns at once. It has finished a good run at Edinburgh, and is now being played in Glasgow. After being performed at Liverpool for some weeks, it is now running at Birmingham, where Mr. Fernandez, of the London theatres, doubles the two parts of the king and the miser, as Mr. Calvert does here, and as Mr. Phelps did in London. At Edinburgh and Glasgow these parts are played by two actors, Mr. J. Johnstone, of Drury Lane, formerly of the Manchester Theatre Royal, playing King James, and Mr. McIntyre, also of Drury Lane, and an actor well known here, enacting Trapbois. In Glasgow, Nigel of Glenvarloch is played by Mr. Kendal, of the Haymarket Theatre, who makes the character one of the most prominent in the piece. At the Prince's Theatre, here, the play continues to draw crowded houses. The humours of the king are highly relished. The behaviour of his Majesty in the King's Lug is very diverting, although outrageously improbable. Moniplies is a great favourite, and it is amusing to observe the triumphant glances of the Scottish portion of the audience when Ritchie despatches the bully Colepepper with "sax inches" of his Andrea Ferrara, and reckons he has "deed o' an indigeestion." Scotch nationality dead, indeed! Why, it seems only beginning. The Red Lion is unusually rampant. Haggis is in the ascendant, Scotch collops are in demand, and cock-a-leekie, as they say in commercial circles, is "looking up." The wand of the great Wizard of the North has evoked the enthusiasm which breaks out at intervals in kilted volunteers, Burns centenaries, curling club dinners, bag-pipes, and the Highland fling. Vivat Caledonia!

POSITIVE, COMPARATIVE, SUPERLATIVE.

The Deed - - - - - - - -	Foul.
The Doer - - - - - - - -	Fowler.
The Narrator - - - - - - -	Foulest.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

WE understand that Mr. Halliday, the author of *The King O' Scots*, will take a benefit at the Prince's Theatre, next Friday evening, on which occasion he will play the part of King James. Mr. Halliday has the advantage over Mr. Calvert in being a Scotchman, and it will be interesting to see how far he is able to carry out on the stage his conception of the character. Considering Mr. Calvert's success in the part, we think that Mr. Halliday shows a very commendable pluck in assuming the character for one evening, and there is little doubt that he will excite sufficient curiosity to fill the house. Mr. Calvert will play the Miser, as usual.

Mr. E. Righton, the favourite comedian of the Theatre Royal, has accepted an engagement in the United States, and will shortly sail for New York, where, we understand, he will join the Lydia Thompson burlesque troupe of English actors.

Might not permission to let their beards and whiskers grow, which has been given to the police of the metropolis, be extended with advantage to our own? To insist upon clean shaving is a remnant of old-fashioned discipline, and a palpable invasion on the liberty of the subject. Growth of hair can scarcely alter the style in which the police perform their duties; and, if it can, all the better. To beards there can be no substantial objection, after the stubbly stage; and to deprive men unnecessarily of what nature has given them, savours of tyranny.

The international four-oared boat races between America and England, which are to take place in August, are creating much interest in aquatic circles. The challenges were given by the members of Harvard College, and accepted, first by the Oxford University Boat Club, and afterwards by Cambridge. The races will be contested on the Thames, between Putney and Mortlake, and each boat will have a coxswain, the Americans having given way on that point. Boating is one of the manliest of our sports, and, like cricket, is marred by few abuses. The Americans deserve great credit for their spirit in crossing the Atlantic for the purpose of meeting the Oxford and Cambridge crews on their own ground—or, we should rather say, water. They excel in boat-building, and, like our own islanders, take to the water as naturally as ducks. This will not be the first time that representatives of the two countries have contended in international matches with varied success. A few years since they beat us in the yacht race, but Kelley defeated Hamill, the American, in the sculling match; the boxing match between Tom Sayers and Heenan resulted in a drawn battle. Subsequently, Tom King defeated the American champion. America has won various trotting matches against English horses, and the American race-horse Umpire won various races, but, although first favourite for the Derby, he was defeated easily. "Deerfoot," the Yankee pedestrian, had great lasting powers, but he could not compete with the best English runners. Paul Morphy, the New Orleans chess-player, carried everything before him when he was in this country. As Englishmen, we cannot exactly say that we wish the American crew success, but we certainly shall not grudge it them if they obtain it. They will labour under some disadvantage by rowing on strange water, which may not be suited either to their boat or their stroke, but no doubt they will have some practice before the race, to counteract this drawback, if it amounts to anything.

The transportation of one's fellow-creatures—not for their country's good so much as their own—seems to be a profitable trade just now. Not only are those who are making velocipedes also making fortunes, but the proprietors of omnibuses are pocketing their ten per cent. The abolition of systems of checks which depend for their efficient working on the co-operation of the public, and the adoption of a simple plan of rigid inspection, enabled the Manchester Carriage Company last year to carry on their business at a profit. How long this prosperous state of things omnibusy may continue, it is impossible to say, as it entirely depends upon the honesty of the inspectors. Even at present, the affairs of the Company are scarcely in a satisfactory condition. The vendors of the business now done by it have not yet received the smallest dividend upon their shares, nor does it seem likely that they will do for some time to come—indeed, until the other shareholders shall have

received an average of ten per cent. since the formation of the Company. The high price of provender has chiefly delayed the realisation of the sanguine hopes of the promoters. To lower this, however, Mr. Lowe's budget will contribute. That clever financial legerdemain will operate both favourably and unfavourably on proprietors of horses and conveyances. Upon the whole, we believe that it will be a considerable pecuniary benefit to them, and it will undoubtedly save them an infinity of trouble. We observe that, because the London General Omnibus Company—which has managed with the utmost difficulty to pay five per cent. this year, after paying nothing last—will gain by the new budget, *Echoes from the Clubs* demands increased accommodation for the public. Verily, it is unfortunate to be a company! Besides being pillaged by juries, cheated by your servants, and injured by the public, you get your financial state known and criticised as well. When a private firm makes a little profit, it pockets it, and nobody dreams of asking it to lower its prices or give better stuff. To hint at such a thing would be considered an impertinence. But to demand a better article from a concern that is almost working at a loss—and that has been, and is permitted to be, systematically robbed—because it happens to obtain a slice of good luck after a whole loaf of bad, is impudence which ought to be quietly put under the parish pump.

Within the last fortnight the new ministry has created a large batch of county and borough justices—all, of course, from among its own political adherents. If honours were usually given in reward of public services, or offices bestowed with any regard to the fitness of those appointed to them, a recent elevation to the borough bench might cause surprise. When, however, nine out of ten appointments are mere operations of the Law of Coincidence, we have no reason to wonder at the recent promotion to a magistracy of a gentleman who is chiefly known on account of the possession of those very qualities which a magistrate ought not to possess. Nevertheless, the circumstance is worthy of remark. Although it is a common spectacle to see men appointed to offices for which they have *no* qualifications, it is not so frequently that we see those appointed who absolutely possess *dis*-qualifications; and such an event is still more deserving of notice when a person promoted to the bench was last conspicuously seen by the public with his thnmb placed against his nose and his fingers extended. But, though this amusing little anomaly is worthy of remark, it is scarcely worthy of comment. It is hardly possible to make the unpaid magistracy more absurd than it is; and, even if it were, such a consummation might be useful in popularising the idea that the fact of a man's having been successful as a butcher, or baker, or candlestick-maker, or cotton-spinner, or other tradesman, is little reason why he should be made a judge. No doubt, it is a glorious achievement to make money, and a man who has enriched himself ought to be rewarded; but the heroic qualities which get wealth are not necessarily, or even probably, judicial; and public spirit should be dignified, or private vanity gratified, in some less illogical and anomalous manner. As it is, neither can be done; for the most vigorous imagination could scarcely conceive it to be either a dignity or a gratification to be placed on a par with a person who puts his fingers to his nose.

All opposition to the Didsbury Undergronnd Railway having been withdrawn, we hasten to make an appeal to the finer feelings of the company, in time. Please don't post the insides of your carriages with advertisements. We should think that by this time every living thing is well aware that the *Daily Telegraph* has the largest circulation in the world; and if *Lloyd's News* has a sale of over half-a-million, pray don't din the fact into one's eyes as the London Underground persists in doing. These advertisements shatter the nerves. We read them over, and over, and over, and over again, long after we have learnt them off by heart and loathe them. And as we go about our work, their hated impression remains upon our retina, and their nauseating information keeps coming into our minds, like a hackneyed old tune that we are sick of, yet can't help humming. We keep muttering to ourselves, "*Daily Telegraph*—Largest Circulation in the World"—"*Lloyd's News*—Sale over Half-a-Million," all day long. Spare us, good Hulse and Perring!

THE CHURCH MILITANT.—St. Paul's, Withington.

REMINISCENCES OF THE STAGE IN MANCHESTER.

THE LECLERCQS AND PAYNES.

THE two families whose names stand at the head of this chapter are well known to Manchester play-goers, as both were for several seasons connected with the local theatres. Their abilities, which appear to be hereditary, have been shown here chiefly in pantomime and ballet, although, during their long connection with the London stage, several members of both families have evinced talents for the higher walks of the drama. Of late years ballet dancing seems to have declined in popularity, and is seldom put forward as a special attraction at any of the leading theatres in the country. Formerly, at the Opera-houses, the ballet divided the interest of the audiences with the musical performances, and in the days of Taglioni, Fanny Elssler, Cerito, and Carlotta Grisi, the Opera-houses were always more crowded during their performances than at any other portion of the evening. We don't quarrel with public taste for this change, if indeed it has changed, for it may be that ballet dancing has only found a more congenial home at the music halls and the Alhambra, where such entertainments are now got up regardless of expense and—appearances. That the celebrated danseuses above-mentioned did display excessive grace and muscular energy in their pirouettes and bounding gyrations we readily admit, though we must own to the impeachment which a Cockney friend and devoteé of the ballet once made against us, that we were not sufficiently educated up to the appreciation of its beauties. Indeed, we have always rather sympathised with Thomas Carlyle's remark, that he could see nothing to admire in a woman's poising herself on her large toe, at the same time elevating her other leg and foot above the level of her head, an inane smile all the while pervading her countenance. As for male dancers of the old-fashioned classic type, the race seems almost to have died out, and an Adonis of the old school, in tight fleshings, and well oiled locks tied up with ribbon, is rarely to be seen, except occasionally on a bare-backed steed at a circus. The services of male dancers seem now to be chiefly confined to burlesques and to the duties of harlequin at Christmas; and those young ladies attached to the theatre, who are still called "the ballet," appear to be chiefly used as stop-gaps between scenes, and to form the retinue and attendants at court of those monarchs and potentates who walk about on all occasions in regal state, with their crowns on their heads, after the manner of King Charles the Second hiding in the oak, as depicted on village signboards. Columbine, however, is still a British institution, and, judging from present appearances, she is likely to maintain her popularity for an indefinite period. The merry, lively, dancing of harlequin and columbine is enjoyable, but the ordinary performances of a group of half-draped girls, with variously developed limbs, is not a very elevating spectacle. To serve as a stop-gap, while some scene is being got ready, may be more or less a stage necessity and contrivance, but we must confess that the various evolutions of an ordinary troupe of ballet girls, bobbing up and down, with certain stereotyped backward and forward movements of their arms and legs, possess for us but scant attractions; and, if we are to judge from the numerous ejaculatory and critical exclamations which escape from spectators, we are disposed to believe that a large portion of the audience is of much the same opinion. What possible earthly or spirit-world resemblance and association can there be between the gambols and frolics of fairy-land, as represented in such a picture as Landseer's "Midsummer's Night's Dream," and the evolutions and very terrestrial movements of a number of young

women, most of whom are anything but ethereal in appearance? Of course this is no fault of these young ladies, who have to earn a living like other folks, but in its relationship to theatrical management, ballet dancing ought to be super-excellent in itself and its accessories, otherwise it is barely endurable. The ballet girls may, however, comfort themselves with this fact, that a place in the corps has frequently given a girl of good abilities an opportunity of distinguishing herself in the higher walks of dramatic art. The very fact of coming constantly before the audience, and learning to move about with ease and freedom, is in itself a useful course of training, for lack of which many a debutante has failed.

The brisk dancing and action, the bustle and quaint fooling of such artistes as the Messrs. C. and A. Leclercq and Miss Mc Ginty will always bring their services into requisition when motley is in season. The two pantomimists who, as clown and harlequin, have helped to entertain the town for the last three months (and we presume we should not be far wrong if we identified columbine with them) are hereditarily associated with the Manchester Stage, as, some years since, their parents, Monsieur and Madame Leclercq, were members of the stock company of the Theatre Royal, and most of their family, as children, took part regularly in the performances, in various capacities. Mr. and Madame Leclercq were what we suppose would be professionally termed dancers and pantomimists, although they frequently took part in dramatic performances, and occasionally played Shakesperian parts. We remember to have seen Mrs. Leclercq play Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* very efficiently, and Monsieur, on more than one occasion, did duty with equal ability as Dr. Caius in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and other characters. But Monsieur Leclercq devoted most of his time to the getting up of ballets of the old school, in which he himself took a conspicuous share as a male dancer. Being a stout man, with a tendency to embonpoint, he was not fitted to undertake the parts of the lovers and Corydons of the ballet, who, got up in the neatest pink silk stockings and costumes of chintz pattern, resembling pretty figures of Dresden china, never struck us as being in the least degree like any of the young shepherds, millers, Hodges, and Giles's, whom we have met with in actual life. Monsieur Leclercq not unfrequently undertook the part of some sylvan god or satyr, and with a crown of bays upon his head, a girdle of goat skins round his loins, and his comely ruddy face all of a glow, he used to execute the most astounding Bacchanalian and saltatory feats, with remarkable zeal and vigour.

The young Leclercqs have inherited the talents of their parents, and are examples of numerous actors and actresses who have emerged from the ranks of the ballet and taken a high position on the stage. Edmund Kean, in his early career, had to play all sorts of characters in pantomimes and melodramas, and frequently undertook the part of Harlequin. Madame Vestris' father was a dancer, and we believe she also began as such. Madame Celeste, in early life, made her reputation by representing characters which were almost entirely illustrated by mute action and dumb show, and Mr. Benjamin Webster also was originally a dancer. When the Leclercqs were at the Princess's Theatre in London with Mr. Charles Kean, it was not for some time that they were provided with speaking parts, but Mr. Kean had a wonderful knack of discovering latent talent among his subordinate actors and actresses, and, after Miss Carlotta Leclercq had made a hit in a sort of half-pantomimic, half-dramatic character, she was entrusted with the part of Marguerite in *Faust*, which she embodied with such grace, simplicity, and pathos as to make quite a sensation, and her position as a leading actress in London was at once established. Those who have seen Carlotta Leclercq as Marguerite, and in many other characters with which she has become identified along with Mr. Fechter and other actors, would scarcely associate her with the little girl formerly known on the Manchester boards. Her sisters, Miss Louise Leclercq and Miss Rose Leclercq, have also occupied prominent and respectable positions in the London theatres, and the two brothers, now so well known here, have had frequent London engagements at the Haymarket and other theatres. Of their performances here it is unnecessary to speak, as they have frequently been alluded to during the run of *Goody Two Shoes*, to the great success of which Messrs. C. and A. Leclercq contributed their full share. Arthur Leclercq is a good musician and a most agile and graceful Harlequin, while his brother is not only about the best clown who has appeared here since Flexmore's engagement, but has, in more than one character, proved that he can undertake parts in legitimate comedy with success.

Few Manchester play-goers can fail to have vivid recollections of the Messrs. Payne and Miss Annie Payne, who, for several seasons, occupied conspicuous positions at the Theatre Royal. Mr. W. H. Payne has been connected, more or less, with the principal London theatres for about half a century. On the death of Mr. Charles Kean, two years since, when a controversy arose about the time and place of Edmund Kean's last appearance on the stage, Mr. W. H. Payne came forward as a witness that he himself had performed the part of Montano to Edmund Kean's Othello, on the evening in question, when he swooned in his son's arms during the performance, and Mr. Payne assisted in removing him from the stage. But it is chiefly as a pantomimist that Mr. Payne has achieved his reputation, and in this line he may almost be said to have created a style of humourous and grotesque acting. When in Manchester he had much to do with the getting up of several pantomimes, such as *Robinson Crusoe* and *Little Red Riding Hood*, which were very successful. The amount of business and fun which he and his sons, who were then mere boys, got out of small situations and simple materials, was wonderful, and always accomplished without any laboured efforts, which spoil all burlesque acting. Miss Payne is, of course, well known to all Manchester folks, as, after a professional career characterised by much grace and modesty of demeanour, she married a gentleman of this city. Henry Payne and Fred Payne inherit much of their father's ability. The former has become a full-fledged clown of the Boleno and Tom Matthews school, while the latter is one of the most amusing pantomimists of the day. The fun which he makes out of Man Friday in *Robinson Crusoe* is astonishing, and his performance of the silent but energetic hussar, in the *Grand Duchess*, is one of the most successful and amusing impersonations in that opera, although he has neither a note to sing nor a word to speak.

NEW WORK ON BILLIARDS.

In the press, and will shortly be published, a sequel to Mr. Roberts's book on Billiards. It will be edited by Mr. Alderman Rumney, and entitled *The Spot Stroke*.

CLERICAL AND MAGISTERIAL.

IN VERDURE CLAD.—The Rev. W. A. O'Connor, asking advice of J. W. Maclure and Francis Turner, Esquires, as to whether he should punch the heads of his congregation generally. Mr. Maclure, after consulting with Mr. Turner, said, "I only wish we could help you, but we cannot."

EPITAPH ON A WHIST-PLAYER.—Waiting for the last Trump!

THE HAPPY DAYS OF CHILDHOOD.

The happy days of Childhood—
They now have passed away:
I, unresembling mild Hood,
Am very glad to say.

It was so very happy—
Supposing I had sneezed
When my papa was nappy—
To be abruptly seized:

To bed, "for *my* good," driven—
Oh, irony grotesque!
And, best of all, *forgiven*—
Oh, humourous burlesque!

At school, if void of knowledge,
I got pronounced obtuse;
If full as is a college,
'Twas not a bit of use.

I daren't correct a stronger
Than me, although a fool;
For fear lest he, in anger,
Should whop me after school.

I know one Billy Bully
Was my especial dread:
He'd chase me through the gully,
And knock me on the head.

With words, when he had got me,
We waged uncivil wars;
Till—when he said "he'd hot me"—
I gave him alley-tors.

If Childhood eats sour apples,
Or more pears than enough,
With its intestines grapples
What execrable stuff!

My parents, when I fisted,
Or made a hideous din,
Judiciously desisted
Imposing medicine:

But calmly and serenely
They offered me preserve,
Because I, said they meanly,
From goodness did not swerve.

Lo! soon the sweetness ceases:
I taste a nasty pill,
Chopped up in little pieces,
To make me very ill!

Their children's wits to hasten
Doth parents so entrance,
The wretched kids to chasten
They never miss a chance.

If chastisements the forming were—
As said papa, when warmed
With birching—of my character,
I'm glad it now is formed.

And what was gained by quickness?
A bit of dried-up cake—
Lest, rich, it should cause sickness—
Too stale for guests to take!

I don't agree with mild Hood;
And I rejoice to ken
The happy days of Childhood
Will never come again.

A CHILDREN'S CHAPEL.

MR. Helps, the author of *Friends in Council*, speaking of the way in which the religious and moral education of children is neglected, says, "They have to listen to long sermons, not one word of which, in their minds, has the slightest application to themselves. It is strange that elder people should have seen that the young should be separated from them as regards all manner of pleasures and entertainments—that they should even have a pantomime in the day-time for children—and that these same people cannot realise the fact that children should have separate instruction in moral and religious matters." To those who have received what is called a religious training, not the least among the sorrows and afflictions of childhood have been the weary hours spent in listening to dreary unintelligible sermons. Looking back across the years, we have a vision of a lofty gallery in a chapel, whither we were marched, with other little sufferers, on Sabbath mornings, there to sit through a lengthened and uninteresting service, under watchful Argus eyes, whose restless glances scared away the sweet angel of sleep, which alone could bring solace to our weary souls. That tired child in church, whom Millais has painted, ensconced in the old family pew, sleeping safely on the soft cushions, in happy oblivion of the sermon, was fortunate among children, compared with ourselves, in thus obtaining relief from its hour of affliction. It was not to be wondered at that, under the circumstances, we should often get restless and disturb the service by a shuffling of feet and other sounds, which the mild remonstrances from a kind and genial face in the pulpit could not altogether check. When the long minutes were counted until the welcome hour of the clock struck announcing the time for release, it is not strange that our ideas of heaven as a desirable place to go to, were somewhat puzzling to our youthful minds when the closing hymn described it as being one

> Where congregations ne'er break up,
> And Sabbaths have no end.

The associations of ideas formed in early youth are powerful, and leave their impressions in after days. One little fellow who was doomed to sit in that gallery spent the time in mortal terror, arising from a sense of its dizzy height. Arrived now at manhood, he has assured me that he is still unable to shake off the sense of fear which haunted him. As that particular jam into which the powders were insinuated remains hateful for ever, and is never tasted again without being associated with the nausea of the abhorred physic, it remains a wonder, after such youthful experiences, that we should ever have been brought to take any pleasure in sermons. And yet, all this was kindly meant by those who were responsible for it, and was part of a system which was thought to work well. Time has, however, brought about changes even in the ideas concerning these matters; the old gallery is demolished, though the chapel remains. A new order of things has been established conducive, we trust, to the comfort of the minister and congregation, and certainly, we should imagine, to the children.

The idea contained in the remarks of Mr. Helps that children should be separately dealt with in the matter of sermons is slowly gaining ground, and we have lately had an opportunity of seeing it embodied in an institution which we believe is somewhat novel in this neighbourhood. Some time ago, an enterprising gentleman, an architect of this city, who takes considerable interest in the religious instruction of the young, conceived the idea of holding separate religious services for children, aided by willing volunteers, and has succeeded in his experiment to a very large extent. The services are held in the large and handsome schoolroom adjoining Rusholme Road Independent Chapel. In this children's chapel, on Sunday evenings, there is an average attendance of four hundred little worshippers, the number on the register amounting to upwards of six hundred. The ages of the children range from four to fourteen years. A special order of services is provided for them, which is indicated on black boards at the end of the room. Each little worshipper has a service-book, and is specially registered as a member of the congregation. Chants, anthems, and hymns, set to cheerful music, are used, and the singing is led by a picked choir, and assisted by a harmonium. The object is to get the children cheerfully interested in the service, and to join in it willingly, without any painful sense of irksome duty. To prevent the service becoming tedious, it is varied as much as possible. The prayers are usually brief, and such as are suited to a child's understanding. The

commandments are read out at each service, and responded to by the congregation. The sermons, which are not intended to be of tedious length, are based upon subjects suited to the hearers, couched in simple language, and illustrated occasionally with pictures. It would be too much to expect the gravity and decorum in this congregation which marks those composed of older people, and, indeed, on the occasion of our visit, it was not quite so orderly as could have been wished; but we imagine it is no easy matter to keep the attention of four hundred restless children. The singing is decidedly the most successful part, and is entered into with a spirit which does one good to hear. For those who love to hear

> The pure-voiced children's chant antiphonal,
> Soft hymn, and holy prayer, and benison,

there are many pleasant and interesting features about this service which commend the idea of it to notice. It may, however, be open to question whether some of the children are not too young even for such a simple public exercise, and whether it is not advisable to hold the service in the morning instead of evening. Religious instruction is always best imparted at home, but if it is found that public forms of worship should be added to this, we see no reason, providing the children join in the services willingly, and they are made as simple, beautiful, and attractive as possible, that children's churches and chapels should not become recognised institutions.

YOUNG LADY FRIENDSHIPS.

EVERY young lady seems, in the absence of husband and children, to have in her moral constitution a certain element of sentimental enthusiasm or "gush." In this trait her character seems to us essentially different from man's. All through her unmarried life much care is taken to find, and much time is wasted in finding, an object upon which this may be expended. Without something upon which to lavish smiles and tears, something to be confided in, to be kissed, caressed and coddled, a maiden's life would be incomplete. There is a regular series of objects which at different periods succeed each other. And in all there is something eminently unreal and fictitious. To their worshippers the objects of idolatry seem not as they are. They are clothed by eager imagination with every beauty and perfection, and are worshipped without doubting or reservation. Dolls probably begin the series, and through the whole of her life woman remains in some sense a doll worshipper.

Early in the succession of the idols of a girl's heart, comes Young Lady Friend. She generally follows closely after the waxen image with gauze habiliments. She takes the prominent place in the affections at the time when faint suspicions as to the wisdom of bestowing so much hugging on a non-sentient creature are beginning to make themselves felt; when wooden dolls are first regarded with a slight feeling of contempt. For a time she helps to satisfy the craving which exists for public and demonstrative embracings, which are transferred from the doll to her. The mission of the Young Lady Friend is to bridge over the interval, be it long or short, till a true bonâ-fide lover of the other sex presents himself. The friendship generally begins at school. Clara and Mary possibly occupy the same room, or by some means brought into contact frequently and closely. Straightway, and without the smallest regard to differences of disposition, they fall in love with each other, and in orthodox fashion swear eternal fidelity. Henceforth they are inseparable, and make themselves a nuisance by the closeness of their adhesion. The cleverer or more industrious of the twain does all the little work which is required at young ladies' boarding schools, while the lazier friend quietly "copies" with unruffled conscience. Punishments and pleasures are as far as possible shared. With the two there is a sort of inner life. Round them extends a hedge through which no outsider is allowed to proceed. Confidences of the most private and important character are shared between them, as to which their other friends are kept altogether in the dark. We have a suspicion that very early on in their career most of these secrets have references to lovers. At the holidays they leave each other with expressions of the deepest and most touching regret. At home Clara's brothers are treated to a never ending song of praise on the subject of Mary—her beauty, charms, and accomplishments. Letters of the most thrillingly gushing description are exchanged daily. They are addressed to "my own darling girl," inevitably enclose "thousands of kisses," and are filled *ad nauseam* with declarations of grief at the separation, of undying love, and with descriptions of such of the eligible young men of the district as may have come under the writer's notice. And thus with little intervals of active hostility or morbid sulking, atoned for by great enthusiasm and more numerous and more public huggings, the time passes till a separation longer and more permanent in duration comes. Artificial school life is relinquished, and to some extent Clara and Mary mix with the world. Then the hollowness, the utter shame of the association make themselves clear; and the hopeless falseness of such friendships shows itself. On parting the old vows of never ending remembrance and love are exchanged, and kept—for a little while. At first epistles in the old fondling strain are indulged in as frequently, or almost as frequently as ever. But soon it dawns on the mind of the devoted Clara or Mary that in some cases at least it is not true, as at school they fancied, that absence makes the heart grow fonder. Little forgetfulnesses and neglects arise; rarely at first, then more frequently. Letters remain unanswered, and soon Mary finds to her astonishment that it is quite possible to exist without thinking very much of her sometime darling. Intervals between correspondence become longer and longer; are by degrees confined to a formal letter on the birthday, and finally cease altogether. Complete estrangement is the end. Possibly they meet in after years, and then doubtless their thoughts are chiefly confined to wondering how each could have ever possessed attractions for the other. There is surely nothing more unexceptionally true than that

> Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.

It is possible that the friendship may not terminate precisely in this fashion. No removal from each others' sphere may happen; or there may be special circumstances which combine to unite the two young ladies in bonds of amity. One or both may possess marriageable brothers. A cynical friend declares that the fact may have an important bearing on the love of girls for each other. He insists that a lady so possessed may count on very numerous and very affectionate lady friends; that big brothers make up for many deficiencies in good looks and general attractiveness. But, though postponed, the end will inevitably come. Some change in the social position of one of the two may hasten it. It is extraordinary how much easier it is to bear the misfortunes than the prosperity of friends. The troubles and sorrows of Mary, Clara can bear without flinching. To help her friend to bear them she is prepared to pour out words of sympathy without stint. But no profundity of love can overlook and pardon a considerable rise in the social scale on Mary's part. After it, the old love, past acts of kindness and self-sacrifice, are buried away out of sight. Jealousy and envy on one side, patronage and sneers on the other, develop into hatred and contempt. Nor can such friendship ever by any chance outlive the advent of a real lover. Fred and Clara cannot co-exist as rivals in Mary's heart. We have never been able to decide whether a young lady's affection is not large enough to subsist on two objects at once; or whether Fred is to be regarded as the ultimate object for the attainment of which Mary comes into existence.

THE NEW STIPENDIARY.

MR. Alderman Abel Heywood made a sensible speech at the last special meeting of the City Council, anent the appointment of the new stipendiary magistrate. We have to be down on Mr. Heywood now and then: let us not lose the opportunity of eulogising him upon the few occasions when we can. He called the attention of the council to the advisability of getting the appointment into its own hands. We wish this could be done. Then we could not only fill the office with merit and not with private influence, but local deserts could be rewarded. Why should our few offices be given to strangers? And still more, why should a prime minister's sister's husband's first wife's second son's thirteenth cousin, or a cabinet minister's wife's uncle's cousin's daughter's husband, or somebody of that sort, be set in authority over us?

A PICTURE.

[From "A Swan and Summer Clouds," by THE HON. RODEN NOEL.]

Now in the lower reflected gulf of blue
A swan sails tranquil with a stately neck
Arched long, with orange beak, and lifted wing
Sail-like on either side, how soft and pure!
Have they not fallen these wings from yonder blue,
Out of the soft white cloud there, so akin
They seem to it? And O the tenderness
Of the blue shadow, scarcely shadow or blue,
Haunting yon dells of down behind the wing!
Surely the white cloud, when it fell from heaven,
Fell with the heavenly motion lingering in it,
For do but note how tranquil and how still
The cloud sails yonder and the swan sails here!

MR. EDWIN WAUGH AT THE FREE TRADE HALL.—On Tuesday evening next, an interesting and attractive entertainment, under the presidency of the Mayor (John Grave, Esq.), is to be given in the Assembly Room of the Free Trade Hall, by Mr. Edwin Waugh, who will be assisted by Miss Romer and Mr. Dumville (of the Cathedral) as vocalists, and by Mr. C. F. Grundy as pianist, Mr. Waugh's readings will comprise a selection from *Besom Ben*, another from *Tattlin' Matty*, the episode of Owd Bodle in *Th' Birtle Carter's Tale*. "The Church Clock," and two of his contributions to the *Sphinx*, "The Nomination" and "the Lost Sixpence." Five of his songs (including his latest, "Minnie," which originally appeared in this journal) will be sung by Miss Romer and Mr. Dumville. It would be needless to say that Mr. Waugh is an admirable reader, were it not that he is perhaps less known in that capacity in Manchester than in any other town of his native county. His first prominent appearance here ought to be signalized by a bumper house, and judging from the array of names upon the committee of management, we should say that such a result is certain to be attained.

SHAKESPERE'S BIRTHDAY.—The members of the Manchester Literary Club, and a number of invited guests, celebrated the aniversary of Shakespere's birthday last week, by an excursion to Edenfield, in the Rossendale Valley, and a dinner at the pleasant hostelry which stands on the high road between Bury and Haslingden. From this point, a fine stretch of country is visible, extending from Haslingden Church (one of the highest in England) on the north, to beyond Holcombe Hill on the south, the memorials to Sir Robert Peel and the Grants (the Brothers Cheeryble) standing out as conspicuous landmarks in the landscape. It was a lovely clear spring day, and the busy beautiful valley, wrapt in sunshine, looked like the land in which it seemed always afternoon. At the dinner, Mr. Joseph Chattwood, president of the Club, presided; Mr. Mitchell, Clitheroe, occupying the vice-chair. There were some capital speeches, Mr. J. P. Stokes, of Manchester, responding for The Press; Mr. T. T. Wilkinson, F.R.A.S., of Burnley, for Science; Mr. Charles Hardwick, for Art; and Messrs. Richardson, of Southowram, F. A. Hasleham, and Edwin Waugh speaking in honour of the day to the memory of Shakespere. There were also present Messrs. David Morris, F.A.S., William Percy, Charles Potter, John Page, (honorary secretary of the club); A. G. Walmsley, C. G. Baskett, Benjamin Brierly, D. A. Morris, Joseph Stelfox, —Haworth, J. D. Morton, John Lord ("the Rossendale mathematician"), and several gentlemen from Blackburn, Bury, Oldham, and other Lancashire towns.

The darkest day, writes an American journalist, in any man's earthly career is that wherein he fancies that there is some easier way of gaining a dollar than by squarely earning it.

LANDSCAPE ART AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

IT is impossible, says the *Times* art critic (Mr. Tom Taylor) to associate with artists without becoming sensible of the serious discouragement our landscape painters have suffered for many years past from the neglect of the Royal Academy. It is for those outside the professional pale who feel this to urge on the Academy—particularly on its younger members and associates, who had never so much power as they have now—that the body has a duty in this matter which it has neglected of late years. It is bound to encourage, and ought to include, representatives of all forms of Academy exhibitions, and driven for refuge to good art. While it remains as it is and has been for many years, without any newly-elected landscape painter—for Mr. Mason owes his well-merited associateship to his figures more than his landscapes—not only is it an imperfect Parliament of Art, but its imperfection tends more and more every year to perpetuate itself. Academicians and associates, figure painters themselves, vote for their friends who are figure painters; till at last it requires an effort to recall, and a still greater one to support by votes, the claims of a different branch of art. These remarks have been suggested by the presence of late years on the New and the Old Society's walls, and still more on those of the Dudley Gallery, of water-colour landscapes by men like T. Danby, Oakes, F. Dillon, H. Johnson, E. Hayes, Hargitt, H. Moore, Mawley, and others, who have won considerable distinction in oil, and who certainly would have continued to advance their reputation in that more durable and forcible material had they felt that the Academy gave them what they had a right to ask, a fair field and no favour. When we look, for example, at a picture like that noble one by F. Dillon, of the Pyramids and the Sphinx, sold at Christie and Manson's last Saturday, we are astonished to find its painter almost banished from the Academy exhibitions, and driven for refuge to the Dudley Gallery. And those who have seen, and heard the history of, the landscapes painted in oil within the last few years by some of the best esteemed members of our water-colour societies (we may take Alfred Hunt as a conspicuous example), could tell of academic discouragements under which landscape art has suffered to a degree unknown to the public, and unsuspected, we believe, by the best part of the Academy itself.

Mr. ROBERTSON'S COMEDIES.

[AN AMERICAN CRITIQUE.]

MR. T. W. Robertson is rapidly attaining to popularity in the United States. Here is what one of the New York papers has to say of him and his; and if all American dramatic criticism is as good as this, the New Yorkers are to be congratulated.

Mr. Robertson's powers have been slowly, steadily, and wisely developed and matured. If we interpret him rightly, he has, although still young, faithfully labored for many years in the vocation of a dramatist; he has endured many hardships; has encountered and overcome many obstacles—urged, guided, and sustained by that entire devotion to the literary calling which is inborn and cannot be acquired, and without which no real success in litterature was ever achieved. Four of his plays have been acted here: *Society*, *Ours*, *Caste*, and *School*. He has written other pieces, but these are doubtless his best. At any rate, they reflect, as in a mirror, his whole nature, and they establish his particular place and rank in the world of letters. He is doing with the drama what Thackeray has done with the novel—albeit in an humbler way. He is a realistic artist, with a poetic mind. In the cables that are used in the British Navy there is a certain strand, known by its color, that is called the King's Yarn. In all of Mr. Robertson's comedies there is a vein of cheerful sadness, sometimes gentle, sometimes bitter, but never weak and never despondent, which may be called the author's spirit. It imparts a mellow and fascinating beauty to these plays—such as haunts and hallows a golden autumn afternoon, or kindles in the pensive smile of one who has endured great sorrow and grown old in patient fortitude. It reveals the writer as a generous, sensitive soul, who has been nurtured in the school of reality, learning hard work, misfortune, and the social world precisely as it exists. Back of these plays is a man who hears and feels the solemn undertone of lamentation that runs through human life. His pictures of youth and love are very bright, cheerful, and charming; but he never fails to indicate the baleful shadows of crafty age and selfishness standing a little way off. His ideals of goodness are very sweet and winning; but he never fails to teach that good and evil are blended in human nature, and that worldly experience but too often causes the evil to prevail. His young people are mostly fine and generous. Their lives are tinged with the glory of romance and warmed by sincere enthusiasm. But always they seem like the "little victims" in Gray's beautiful and touching Ode. They are regardless of the doom which Selfishness, personified by Society, stands ready to impose, and they play and are happy for a little while, because "ignorance is bliss." His elderly people, on the contrary, are, for the most part, of a very different sort—are generally the prudent, decorous, self-seeking, icy-hearted bond-slaves of conventionality, who have left their noble aspirations by the roadside of life, and are now travelling on with the more useful luggage of sordid cares. In a word, he perceives and depicts the qualities of human nature and the conditions and contrasts of social life precisely as they are; and so there is shadow behind his sunshine, and sorrow behind his joy. Thackeray's novels display this same order of mind—but grander, more massive, riper with culture, and more heavily freighted with experience. Different in method, the spirit and the artistic design of these novels and plays are kindred. Such a mind, laboring with such a purpose, naturally commands success. Its work is done with all its strength; is the expression of absolute truth in the language of absolute sincerity; is thorough and not experimental; is earnest, sound, and good; and therefore it prospers in its own day, and will endure to after-times. Fully to estimate the value of these comedies we must also consider what a wealth of new vitality they have given to the stage, and how much innocent pleasure and genuine benefit they have given to the public. Actors and actresses find in them actual characters to portray—characters that are shown, as in real life, under the pressure of moving and moulding circumstances, yet, as art requires, in exceptional situations of a dramatic quality. A new impulse is thus given to the art of acting. People who see these plays, moreover—with appreciation of their meaning—perceive the chilling tyranny to which noble and guileless youth is so often subjected; the waste of sweetness and beauty that is constantly going on in the world; the need there is for strengthening every humanizing influence; and the marble whiteness and true nobility of eminence which human beings attain who are true ladies and gentlemen. Other graces of influence Mr. Robertson's comedies have beside—in their terse, compact, silvery dialogue; their frequent ripples of sentiment and flashes of wit; their true thoughts; and their sympathy alike with all that is fine, generous, and noble in human nature, and all that is pathetic in the inevitable wrecks and disappointments incidental to human existence.

INTERNATIONAL UNCERTAINTIES.—A Dutchman once met an Irishman on a lonely highway. As they met each smiled, thinking they knew each other. Pat, on seeing his mistake, remarked with a look of disappointment, "Faith, an' I thought it was you, and you thought it was me, an' it's naythur of us." The Dutchman replied. "Yaw, das is dhru. I am anundher man, and you ish not yourself; we pe poth some oder podies."

HERR FORMES AS SHYLOCK.—The *Merchant of Venice* was produced on Saturday at the Edinburgh Theatre Royal with a new Shylock in the person of the distinguished basso and actor, Herr Formes. The Edinburgh journals appear to be at variance in their estimate of the German Shylock. One critic especially falls foul of his Balmoral boots and white cotton stockings as foreign to a Venetian Jew of that period. Manchester will erelong have the opportunity of judging for itself.

A subscription paper, circulated for some charitable purpose, presented to a wealthy French manufacturer, who subscribed 20 francs. "Twenty francs!" said the lady who presented the list to him; "why, your son has subscribed 50 francs." That's all very well, "replied the manufacturer, "my son has a rich father, and can afford it."

HOW TO PREVENT A THEATRICAL PANIC.—The facetious Joe Hall (the original *Lockit* in "The Beggars' Opera") in the year 1730, when the scene-room at Convent Garden was on fire, and the audience greatly alarmed, was ordered by Rich, the manager, to run on the stage and explain the matter, which honest Joe did in the following extraordinary address: "Ladies and gentlemen, for heaven's sake, don't be frightened—dont stir—keep your seats—the fire is almost extinguished; but if it was not, we have a reservoir of one hundred hogsheads of water over your heads, that would drown you all in a few minutes." [*Exit* Joe.]

ARRIVAL OF THE BIRDS.—The recent mild weather has brought over nearly all the summer migratory birds. The first to arrive is generally the chiffchaff, which made its appearance this year about the middle of March. Towards the end of that month a few wheatears had arrived. On the 8th of April, the wind having veered round to the west, the birds began to arrive in great quantities, and on that day a large number of wheatears, in company with meadow pipits, arrived in the vicinity of Hampstead and Highgate, and were caught by the bird-catchers in considerable quantities. On the 9th a ring-ouzel was captured, and on the 11th nightingales, greater and lesser whitethroats, winchats, tree pipits, and wrynecks were obtained. Plenty of swallows were also flying about. A correspondent informs us that the cuckoo was heard in the neighbourhood of Chester last Sunday. In Scotland, swallows have arrived five days earlier than last year.

Cassel—a tiny little German town—had last year one hundred and nine operatic performances of forty-four different operas.

FIRE OR SMOKE?—A story is told of a man who insured in London one thousand cigars, valued at £40, against fire and water. After the lapse of six months he made his appearance at the insurance office and demanded his money, as the cigars had been burned. "But not on board the vessel, sir?" said the secretary, "for she is in the dock now." Yes, on board the vessel. I smoked them, and therefore burned them all myself, and the insurance says 'against fire.'" The secretary was taken aback, but told the smoker to call again next day. He called at the appointed time, but was met by the solicitor of the company, who told him that if he did not relinquish his claim he would be prosecuted as one who had knowingly and wilfully set fire to goods insured by the company.—*Baltimore Underwriter.*

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

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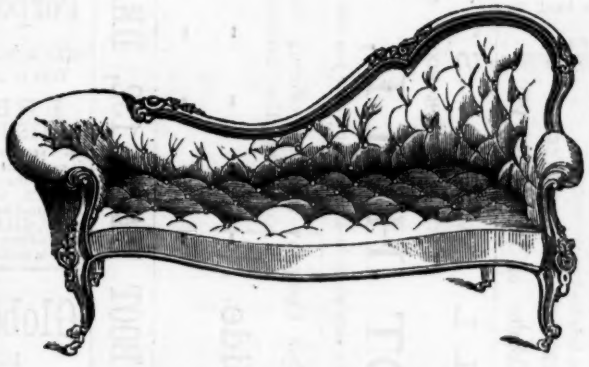

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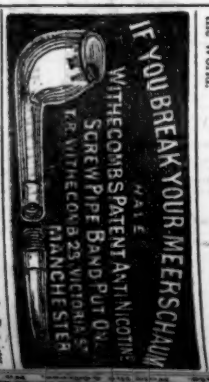

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